

**Missoula County Public Schools  
Title I Community Advisory Committee**

Tuesday, October 1, 2013

6:00 to 7:30 PM

Administration Building, Room 24

**Attendees:** Tara Barba, Brian Bessette, Heather Davis Schmidt, Amanda Dellwo, Leslie Gallant, Lori Grant, Terry Jarvis, Sindie Kennedy, Tracy Ledyard, Stephanie Morrow, Matt Quinlan, Erica Ramsey, Julie Robitaille, David Rott, Joy Seymour and Shannan Sproull.

**Guests:** Brian Brewster, WORD and Craig Krueger, Missoula Youth Homes.

**Guiding Question:**

How do we assure the MCPS Title I program best meets the needs of students and families?

**Long term target:**

Align Title I goals, programming and budgets to the Federal requirements, MCPS district, Graduation Matters and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model of Education goals.

**Short term targets:**

- Review Community Advisory Committee purpose
- Get to know each other (Personal Stories Protocol)
- Review collective commitments for collaborative work
- Review Neglected & Delinquent programming (Title I, Part A set-aside and Title I, Part D)
- Review McKinney-Vento and Title I homeless set-aside programming

**AGENDA**

<b>6:00 – 6:10</b>	<p>Welcome, dinner, review agenda and review Community Advisory Committee purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heather welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. She explained that last year we focused a lot on budgets. This year we will focus on programming.</li></ul> <p>Heather provided some background information on how Title I decisions have been made in the past and how this committee will help with making decisions. Last year, this committee helped us think about funding and whether we would fund Paxson and whether we would fund high schools in the way they had been funded in the past or apply a Feeder School pattern. Feedback from this committee, the Title I staff and district leadership informed the decision to not fund Paxson and to continue funding the high schools based on Free &amp; Reduced Lunch data (this meant a decrease in Hellgate's funding). Heather explained when we uploaded the high school Title I grant to eGrants, the state grant management site, it was rejected. We were instructed to use the 125% rule or the Feeder School pattern. If we were to apply the 125% rule, we would not have</p>
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	<p>been able to fund Hellgate at all, based on the requirements. We decided to use the Feeder School pattern to fund the high schools. This resulted in Big Sky and Seeley-Swan receiving less funding and Hellgate receiving more funding. The district Title I department will utilize carryover funds to make up for the difference to Big Sky and Seeley-Swan, as a result of using the Feeder School pattern.</p>
<b>6:10 – 6:20</b>	<p>Get to know each other (Personal Stories Protocol)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heather asked everyone to find a partner and to share their name, their job title and the name of the elementary school they attended as a child. She then instructed everyone to report to the larger group and to share the name of their partner, their job title and the name of their elementary school.</li> </ul>
<b>6:20 – 6:25</b>	<p>Review collective commitments for collaborative work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heather asked all attendees to review the Collective Commitments for Collaborative Work. She asked if everyone agreed on the commitments and if there were any commitments that needed to be removed or added. Everyone agreed on the existing commitments.</li> </ul>
<b>6:25 – 6:55</b>	<p>Review Neglected &amp; Delinquent programming (Title I, Part D Neglected &amp; Delinquent and Title I, Part A N&amp;D set-aside)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I, Part A N&amp;D set-aside funding overview – Heather Davis Schmidt Title I law requires districts to provide educational support to students that are considered neglected and delinquent. In addition to money received from the Title I, Part D grant, we also are required to set-aside funds for Neglected &amp; Delinquent students in the Title I grant. In the past few years, we have explored a variety of programs. The N&amp;D At-risk Counselor (Shannan Sproull's position) is in its third year of existence (Shannan's second year in the position). She spends a lot of her time at the Juvenile Detention Center and she spends time in all of the buildings. Our Title I set-aside budget for N&amp;D is \$24,700. At the high school, the set-aside is \$13,500. Our Title I, Part D grant is around \$54,000. All of that allocation goes directly to Youth Homes. The required set-aside is based on a per-pupil amount multiplied by the number of students served when counted in the fall and reported to the state. The official count comes from the state and is based on the number of students in delinquent facilities when the count was performed. Heather explained Gary Evans at the JDC performs the same count.</li> <li>Youth Homes programming (Title I, Part D) – Craig Krueger, Missoula Youth Homes Craig explained he manages the Missoula Youth Homes and works predominantly at the Attention Home. He explained the Title I, Part D funding became available to them fairly recently and has been very beneficial. The students at the Attention Home are categorized as delinquent and are transitioning from treatment facilities and correctional programs. When transitioning, there may experience gaps in their schooling. The students stay in the A Home for 30 days. These students are already well behind academically. They are entering the system due to delinquency or neglect. Often the students enter the system with significant educational needs.</li> </ul>

	<p>Dave asked what constitutes neglected or delinquent. The facilities are either considered neglected or delinquent facilities. All of the Youth Homes are delinquent facilities. A student can be adjudicated or be in detention. Even those kids that may not have been adjudicated, are counted. Every student that is in the A Home as a result of placement by DFS would be considered delinquent because of their placement.</p> <p>Craig explained a big part of the budget funds the Learning Lab, specifically the teacher salary for Marilyn Seastone. Students participating in the Learning Lab may be those that have extended their out-of-school limit. They are trying to come back into the system and get back into school. There are a lot of uncertainties as to what is going to happen. There is lag time in trying to determine if they are going back home, do they need a new IEP, will they graduate or will they have to get a GED? These questions can be explored in the Learning Lab. This provides a student a different perspective. It gives the student a chance to realize they could make a difference in their own lives. Often times, kids need to go into placement. Missoula is resource rich so a lot of students seek services from outside of our community. Sometimes the services are at capacity and cannot meet the needs of Missoula students. Sometimes there are not adequate services in Missoula.</p> <p>Students that are struggling to be successful in a school can go to the Learning Lab and get the support they need. If these students are making choices that are dangerous to other kids in the school, they could go to the Learning Lab. Other group homes in the district can send students to the Learning Lab. They want to maintain the school experience, provide consistency and keep students in the mindset of learning. This is particularly necessary for low income students, especially over the summer. The Tom Roy Youth Garden program is one summer program that keeps students engaged. They employ a gardener and utilize funds to teach students about food systems and gardening. The participating students are treated as employees and are expected to behave as such. They can be fired. They have to develop a budget. If all goes well, they will leave the program with a job reference. They will receive a letter of recommendation from the gardener. This provides a baseline for students when trying to obtain employment.</p> <p>The program also emphasizes physical activity. Research demonstrates that students learn better when they are physically healthy. Students are taken on hikes and educational field trips. The N&amp;D grant funds some of the fieldtrips as well as the vocational programs. The Youth Homes programs institute expectations and propel students into the mental state for learning. By utilizing opportunities to make learning fun, students are more engaged. These students have not enjoyed much success in the traditional school setting. They have had the most pleasure at school when they are in trouble. They do not believe in themselves and do not think they will do well academically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N&amp;D at-risk counselor (Title I set-aside) – Shannan Sproull, At-risk School Counselor</li> </ul> <p>Shannan explained that 50% of her time is spent supporting neglected and delinquent students. These are students that are placed at the Juvenile Detention</p>
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Center. The JDC is a regional facility that serves five counties and the reservation. Shannan works one-on-one with only MCPS students. Heather and Shannan have developed a program where Shannan is teaching a class two times per week. She meets with the students one-on-one at least once per week. When they return to school, Shannan follows them. She has worked with students as young as 12 and as old as 17 (once they are 18, they move to the adult side of the facility). She does an intake with each student. She looks at their grades, at the support services that already exist (e.g., CSCT), etc. She focuses on working with students that may be falling through the cracks and that are not getting services in other ways.

In searching for effective, research-based programs last winter, Shannan came across Check and Connect. The program was developed at the University of Minnesota and has been around for 22 years. It is a Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 intervention. It is a more intense intervention than check in/check out. It is a dropout prevention program or, as the program developers prefer, a school completion program. It is geared towards a two-year commitment of mentoring students and working closely to build relationships. The majority of the kids are some of the most disengaged students. They already do not like school. They do not do well at school and are behind in credits. There may be substance abuse issues. Their home life might be tumultuous. The key component is building a relationship.

This program could help students meet their baseline needs. School counselors do not have time to meet the needs of all students. Shannan can be helpful by providing more intensive services than school counselors. She loves all of the programming that the district provides, but feels these opportunities might not always meet the needs of the students that are at greatest risk of not graduating.

Shannan collaborates with all of the agencies in town such as the A Home. She is also the liaison for the drug court.

Heather invited questions.

Stephanie asked if there is a way to identify these students before they hit 6th, 7th or 8th grade.

Heather explained that the state is working on an early warning system. They want us to look at our major criteria: attendance, office referrals and a failing grade in a math or reading class. This process places students on a list and ranks students on their likelihood to graduate or dropout. It is not fully developed but it is well on its way. We hope to see that soon. Anecdotally, we can identify those students in early grades. Realistically, we cannot start identifying the students until middle school. Typically, elementary school students are not failing subjects, but they might be struggling. We focus on middle school and freshman data.

Leslie asked if Shannan's work will be in non-Title I buildings. Heather explained that Shannan went to the elementary schools and asked where they need help. Everyone reported that chronic absenteeism is the biggest issue. We define chronic absenteeism as missing 10% of instructional time. Heather stated that

	<p>some students were missing 100 out of 180 days of school. There are no teeth in the law. The county attorney can fine parents \$25. There are no repercussions if the parents do not pay the fine. Denise Juneau has been looking at this. The OPI has decided to focus on the dropout age. According to the law, a student can dropout at the age of 16; Denise Juneau would like to change the legal dropout age to 18. There are benefits tied to families that would encourage them to keep their students in school (if they dropout illegally, parents will not get that funding). This makes it a political issue.</p> <p>Tracy applauded the work that Shannan is doing because it is vitally important to connect with and identify these students.</p> <p>Terry asked if there is a parenting piece. Craig explained that for them, it varies. The single largest percent of the students return home (about 40%). The other kids go into foster care, group homes, etc. The drive is to provide parents with support services. They do provide referrals to agencies that go into the home to teach parenting skills. Some parents cannot get their kids to go to school. Part of this is helping parents develop the strategies to get their students to school. The challenge is that patterns have been established. Sometimes in the home, school is not always considered a good thing. Craig explained there are some limits as to what can be done. Most often, the families they work with are low income and qualify for Medicaid, which provides resources. Some of the students are part of DFS or Youth Court and there is a parenting plan. This is more effective and less costly.</p> <p>Shannan explained there is a parent involvement component of her work at the JDC and with Check and Connect. Since her time is limited, it is difficult to incorporate the parental component. Right now, she is focusing on meeting with the students, but ideally, the parent piece would be incorporated.</p>
<p><b>6:55-7:25</b></p>	<p>Review McKinney-Vento and Title I homeless set-aside programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of historical relationship between MCPS and WORD and the relationship between the McKinney-Vento grant and Title I homeless set-aside funding – Heather Davis Schmidt</li> </ul> <p>Heather provided some background on the relationship between MCPS and WORD. Approximately 21 years ago, Missoula started receiving the McKinney-Vento grant. For 19 years, WORD handled all aspects of the McKinney-Vento program. MCPS simply served as the fiscal manager of the grant. Two years ago when we had a monitoring visit for McKinney-Vento, the state informed us that the McKinney-Vento grant was being managed inappropriately. The state directed MCPS to take a more active role in defining and implementing the McKinney-Vento program to assure student needs were being met and to assure compliance with the law. We went through a process of working with WORD. Last year was the first year with this new process. WORD helped us with program transition. They helped write the grant and develop the program. They provided and continue to provide family advocacy. Many of the eligible families interact with WORD before they connect with the district. WORD also continues to provide FIT tutoring with volunteer tutors that are brought into the schools. Previously, tutors might have pulled students out of the classroom to provide</p>

tutoring. With the new model, the tutors are working in the classroom and working closely with the teachers. The fourth component of WORDs programming is the Summer Arts & Leadership Camp. We did not have enough funding last year to support this part of the program initially, but we were able to apply for reallocated funding to support the summer program. This year, we reduced the program management piece quite a bit because we no longer required help with writing the grant and developing the program.

This year, we anticipate the McKinney-Vento grant award to be approximately \$41,000. All of those funds will support our contract with WORD (with some additional funding coming from the Title I homeless set-aside). This does not include funding for the summer program. We hope to have enough funding at the end of the year to support the summer camp.

- **WORD FIT Tutoring Program (McKinney-Vento grant) – Ben Brewster, WORD**  
Ben explained the emphasis is to get tutors into the classroom to help students with unmet academic needs. In addition to academic tutoring, he wants to provide good mentors. We want to mentor students that are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Just because a student may qualify for services, does not mean they require academic support. The tutors focus on the students that are struggling academically. The volunteer tutors come from the community; some may come from the university. Ben is responsible for recruiting, training and working with the tutors. The tutors go into a classroom twice per week for 30 to 45 minutes each time. They work under the guidance of the teacher. The tutors focus on supporting students in math and reading, as per direction from the teacher. This helps the student stay focused and get caught up. Ben feels students do not receive enough one-on-one support. Many families that are affected by homelessness are more worried about where their next meal will come from; academics are often less of a concern. Ben tries to push for the tutors to commit to an entire academic year, to provide some consistency. The stability and consistency is critical since students may be coming from a background where there is little consistency from day to day.

When training tutors, Ben reviews the MCPS handbook and the district learning targets with the volunteers. He wants to assure the tutors are prepared to meet the academic requirements. Some tutors work with one student. Some tutors work with multiple students.

Ben stated they compared math and reading scores between those FIT students that received tutoring services with those that did not. Those students that received tutoring services did demonstrate an increase in academic achievement. And, in terms of satisfaction with the program, the feedback from teachers and parents is mostly positive.

Summer Arts & Leadership Camp - Ben has been associated with the summer camp for the past 8 years. The camp is offered to the same population that qualifies for McKinney-Vento services. The activities coincide with learning targets. Camp is only for students 4th through 8th grade. Participants are placed in four groups. They are matched with a counselor and a junior counselor (a student that has aged out of the program). They usually enroll about 70 children.

	<p>They take the students on the Mountain Line scavenger hunt. They try to get the students out in the community and teach them how to utilize the busing system and community resources. The students can use Mountain Line free of charge during the summer. They do other activities like horseback riding, fencing, river rafting. Ben spent a lot of time contacting parents to determine why their student missed camp. They do provide free transportation. They provide breakfast and lunch. They provide snacks through collaboration with the Food Bank. They provided school supplies and backpacks to all of the students.</p> <p>Ben tries to keep families involved in the camp program. Families meet at the Osprey Park and have dinner and watch a baseball game. The families also attend the talent show. The camp lasts 6 weeks. There is one week of training prior to the start of camp. Camp is free and is offered four days per week from 9 to 3:30.</p> <p>Heather stated there has been some research on how important it is for low income students to experience activities that they might not otherwise experience. It builds background knowledge. It allows them to connect with the school literature in ways they might not be able to do absent extra-curricular activities that many students take for granted.</p> <p>Erica explained that the FIT kids at Porter love the camp and start asking when camp will begin. Julie asked if the counts are rising or falling. Ben explained last year the numbers dropped some but he would like to get those numbers back up.</p> <p>Heather explained the state found that some of the students were not getting counted properly. Ben explained he was responsible for determining if students were 100% qualified for the camp. He did a screening to assure that students were a good fit for the summer camp.</p> <p>Julie asked to get a list of the students that are getting FIT tutoring. Julie suggested that the buildings could provide resources to enhance those services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families in Transition (FIT) Coordinators (Title I set-aside) – Sindie Kennedy, District FIT Liaison</li> </ul> <p>Sindie explained that FIT stands for Families in Transition. FIT is the preferred term because “homeless” does not adequately describe the families’ living situations and it is a stigmatizing terms. She explained that the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act defines homelessness differently than HUD, which considers “homeless” to equate to unsheltered living. The McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness is more liberal. A family that lost their house and moved in with a relative until they can get back on their feet is eligible for McKinney-Vento services. A family that asks a friend or family member to house their student temporarily due to a loss of housing is also eligible for McKinney-Vento services. The latter scenario would mean the student is an unaccompanied homeless youth because s/he is living in kinship care without a legal guardian. Unaccompanied Homeless Youth can be students of any age, but typically, these students are high-school-aged students that have left home for one reason or another (abuse, neglect, refusal to abide by home rules, etc.).</p>
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	<p>FIT students can attend their school of origin or their new neighborhood school. School of origin means the school they attended when housed or the school they last attended. FIT students are automatically eligible for free meals, Title I services and transportation (e.g., busing) if temporarily living outside of the school-of-origin boundary. Last year, we reported 425 FIT students to the state. We suspect this is an under-representation of eligible students. It is likely not all students were identified.</p> <p>In efforts to improve our identification efforts of eligible students and to assure eligible students are adequately served, we budgeted for 10-hour-per-week FIT coordinators for the non-Title I buildings. We started this program last year and it took a while to get coordinators in all of the buildings (in fact, a couple of buildings never did get FIT coordinators in place). This year, we are happy to report that all buildings but one have FIT coordinators (the last building is in the hiring process).</p> <p>The FIT coordinators function much like FRC coordinators in the Title I buildings. The only difference is FIT coordinators mainly serve students eligible for FIT services. Their principle role is to identify students in their building by collaborating with the building staff, the district Title I staff and WORD. Once students are identified, the coordinators work with the families to refer them to community services and to try to meet any needs they can within their building (e.g., requesting clothing and food donations from their school community, etc.).</p>
<b>7:25-7:30</b>	<p>Closing and next steps  <a href="#">Exit Ticket: 3, 2, 1</a></p> <p>Heather explained that N&amp;D and FIT students are eligible to receive Title I services in non-title I buildings. She asked the committee to think about programming in non-Title I buildings. Should we do anything differently?</p> <p>Heather asked that everyone provide some feedback in the Exit Ticket and think about programming.</p> <p>Next meeting date: <b><i>Tuesday, January 28, 2014</i></b></p>